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ABSTRACT

Noting that teaching methods are ineffectual unless teacher education students are aware of their preconceptions and internalizations, a study explored the conceptual frameworks of preservice English teachers. The study addressed the following questions: (1) Can preservice teachers objectively discuss their notions of school life, and are they aware of the values and beliefs they will take into the classroom? (2) Do they plan for coping with perceived obstacles or problematic existing practices? (3) Are there predominant metaphors in their thinking? (4) Are there conflicting images concerning the learner, the subject matter of English, or future teaching roles? and (5) What implications can be drawn by probing the images, concerns, and goals of preservice teachers? Subjects, 8 graduate and 12 undergraduate English education majors at a large research university, submitted to an in-depth interview and completed a questionnaire. Results indicated that preservice teachers were well aware of the differences between English as it was taught in their own high schools and ideas about its teaching as presented in university education courses. Findings also showed that any attempt to classify their beliefs about teaching as a traditional conception of the curriculum, or as only growth-oriented, or predominantly concerned with skills competency were unsuccessful, since all respondents considered these three approaches as not mutually exclusive in practice. (Figures and tables of data are included, and references and questionnaire samples are appended.) (NKA)

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A SEARCH FOR IMAGES:

INQUIRY WITH PRESERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS

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A SEARCH FOR IMAGES:

INQUIRY WITH PRESERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS

Abstract. This inquiry, using the case study methodology of naturalistic inquiry, explored the conceptual frameworks held by 20 preservice English teachers. Eight graduate students with degrees in English or related fields and 12 undergraduates in three different English Education programs comprised the sample which was purposively chosen as representative of students seeking secondary English certification. Past classroom experiences and field work provided the background for the respondents' thinking about teaching. Images, expressed as statements, encompassed and gave insight into their ideas, values, assumptions and projections about curricular approaches, learning priorities, teachers' roles, the school's function, and career concerns. Qualitative data collected from individual semistructured interviews, written questionnaires, documents, and records were analyzed for consistency and comprehensiveness. This research, concerned with aspects unique to teaching English, was grounded in the belief that educators must support preservice teachers' articulation of approaches to action.

Teaching, like performing a Mozart concerto, improvising with a jazz band, or conducting an orchestra, is a moment-by-moment activity. The person, in a dialectical, interactive relationship with other persons in a certain context, begins with a score or a plan and then selects and reacts in a unique way at the given time and place. Neither rigidity nor careless abandon characterizes the praiseworthy event. Teaching at its best is thus equated with the art (Greene, 1973, 1978; Hawkins, 1981). While reading the emerging qualities and guided by values and beliefs or generalizations they hold to be true (Eisner, 1979), teachers make judgments that unfold during the course of action.

Whether they admit it or not, teachers rely on some sort of pedagogical theory in carrying out their teaching activities (Astin, 1985;

Hunt, 1980). Even novices possess some theories which they have created to order their experiences and to anticipate future events. These theories are frames of reference or plans that help focus attention. They provide rough approximations of what might be expected, generalizations that can be considered reflectively. A theory becomes dysfunctional only when regarded as a fixed formula.

Research concerned with the perspectives of classroom teachers has shown that their own backgrounds, interests, and experiences greatly influence what is taught and what is attended to in the classroom. Instructional methods are wasted unless teachers-to-be are aware of their preconceptions and internalizations (Goodlad, 1984). Active thinking about beliefs and teaching preferences, a synthesis of past and current practices in terms of values and understandings, and a developing knowledge of connections between theoretical frameworks and practice situations must be goals promoted in teacher education (Lortie, 1975). Identification of theories is essential before experimentation and validation can occur in practice.

The study of the thinking processes of teachers, specifically how they gather, organize, interpret, and evaluate information can lead to understandings of the human processes that guide and determine how teachers act upon curriculum (Clark & Yinger, 1977). Interview and observational studies done by many researchers have shown that some set of concerns or beliefs ungirds teachers' behavior (Boomer, 1985; Bussis, Chittenden, & Amarel, 1976; Hunt, 1984). Teachers interpret their unique situations with their own set of constructs (Oberg, 1984). The

determination of the best action to take in any given situation is a function of, not only the teacher's view of the situation and skills needed, but also of his or her image of what is appropriate and desirable (Oberg, 1986).

Teachers' decisions grow out of personal practical knowledge, a body of knowledge held in a unique way because it is derived from one's lived experiences (Elbaz, 1983). This knowledge consists of rules of practice, practical principles, and images. Knowledge becomes available for practice through the medium of images. These images are less explicit and more inclusive than rules of practice or practical principles. Images as more than abstract conceptual or propositional structures are embodied experiential meaning complexes (Johnson, 1985). Elbaz (1983) suggested that a beginning teacher would have fairly clear images but few rules of practice and inadequate practical principles to guide his or her work.

This study of preservice teachers' understandings concerning subject matter, roles of the teacher, the learner, learning and schooling assumed the importance of images and metaphors in shaping and revealing conceptions of teaching. An image, as the sum of what one thinks of as known, is built up as a result of the past experiences of the possessor of the image. Through the gift of language, one is capable of having an image of the world and also talking about it. Consistency, coherence, survival value, stability, and organizing power of the image can be examined (Boulding, 1956).

"Image" in this study was used as the mental picture or conception on which behavior would depend (Elbaz, 1983). Images were conceived of as encompassing the practitioner's espoused construct system as illustrated in Figure 1.

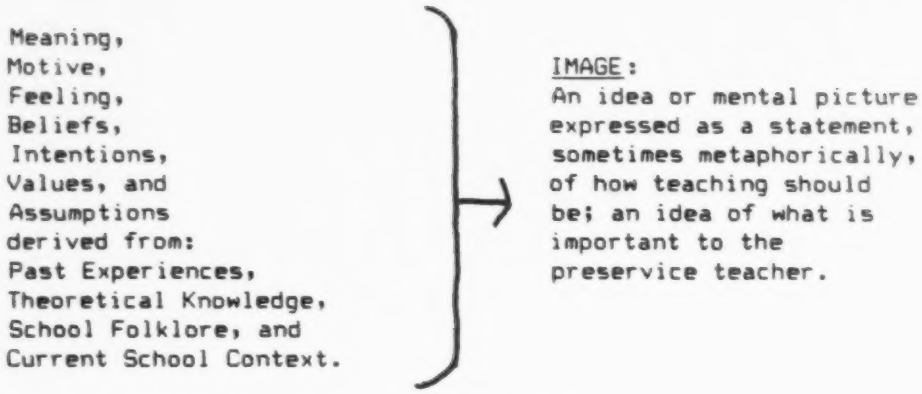

Figure 1

Image: What It Encompasses

Concerned with the conceptual frameworks preservice English teachers held prior to being student teachers, this study probed respondents' emergent images for consistency and comprehensiveness. Because an image is generally imbued with a judgment value, it has power over behavior as one is led to act in a way that is consistent with that image (Elbaz, 1983). Therefore, images, used as devices for reorganizing one's perceptual and conceptual structures, will order and condense various aspects of one's knowledge and guide decision-making (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

A search for images is consistent with the belief that the imaginative modes of awareness which involve attending, noticing, thinking, and reflecting are all essential to the teacher as artist (Greene, 1973, 1978). Such thinking about one's own experiences, knowledge, and understanding is crucial to the activity of teaching. It is of particular importance for preservice English teachers because the teaching of English has gone through many transitions with the result that diverse, conflicting practices have persisted. Various issues such as whether it

is a discipline with a certain subject matter content or what the nature of that discipline might be have not been resolved by English educators (Farrell, 1986; Henry, 1986; Purves, 1986). According to Garth Boomer (1982), English teachers will not be capable of finding cracks in their cosmic egg--forces and counterforces which act upon the teaching of English--until they have developed a personally articulated set of principles and theories to justify, explain, and inform what they do.

Most preservice teachers, conditioned by years of authoritarian methodology, need encouragement and support to become aware of possibilities for openness and autonomy which are necessary for teachers to operate as professionals and artists. Looking at what images are possessed as practitioners enter the profession must be a part of efforts to improve teacher education. This inquiry about the thinking of the preservice teachers and their emergent images was undertaken as an addition to what is known about the thinking of English teachers (Bloland, 1983; Diamond, 1982; Elbaz, 1983; Mertz & Zidonis, 1982) and to supplement studies dealing with the concerns of those learning to teach (Burden, 1982; Fuller, 1969; Fuller & Brown, 1975). The study included the following questions:

1. Are preservice teachers able to stand back from and discuss their notions of school life; and in so doing, are they aware of the values and beliefs they will take into the classroom as teachers?

2. Do preservice teachers articulate plans or possibilities for coping with perceived obstacles or potentially problematic existing practices?

3. Are there predominant metaphors in the preservice teachers' thinking--individually or as a group? Are there patterns that can be attributed to different educational backgrounds?

4. Are images concerning the learner, the subject matter of English, or future teaching roles conflicting?

5. What are the implications, if any, that can be drawn for teacher education by probing the images, concerns, and goals of preservice teachers?

Background

An interest in teaching viewed as an artistic enterprise rather than as a mechanical activity combined with instructive and supervisory activities with many college students led to this inquiry of the thinking of preservice English teachers. This researcher noted that anticipation of teaching was often accompanied by a concern that the "correct" method needed to teach may not be known. This study was based on the premise that expression and subsequent reflection of one's set of beliefs and assumptions about teaching and learning can help make the process of becoming a teacher a more conscious effort.

The significance of the teacher's role is that there are no final answers, no specific formulae to use while making decisions in preparing materials, choosing activities, or responding to students. Many problematic aspects of the profession--the uncertainty, complexity, instability, and uniqueness of teaching--require a broad range and repertoire of approaches, informal improvisation, and thoughtful reflection by the practitioner/teacher about each practice situation. Schon (1983) thus calls for teachers, like other professionals, to reflect-in-action and become researchers, inquirers, and decision makers in the practice context. Such research in practice begins with an awareness of the beliefs and assumptions which shape the framing of one's role. Teacher educators agree that the habit of inquiry must be cultivated to prevent the view of teaching as an activity with predetermined means leading to specific ends where the efficient teacher fits molds and plays roles defined by others (Greene, 1982; Griffin, 1983; Koehler, 1985).

The responsibilities and expectations of teachers are those of a profession--being aware, responsible, open, and flexible--yet the realities tend to constrain with the actual practice being more like a trade (Goodlad, 1984). Instead of professional dialogue and autonomy, teachers find isolation and fragmentation. They often resort to practices designed to keep students passive as more professional values are held in a "permanent state of abeyance" (Goodlad, 1984, p. 192). Faced with increased criticism and legislation and with limited opportunities for career changes, teachers exist in conditions that do not promote creative teaching or growth as expected in a profession.

Aware of the attitudes of teachers and students in schools where field experience have been done, preservice teachers have concerns about self and personal survival which focus on their own content adequacy, ability to control a class, and being liked by students and colleagues (Fuller & Brown, 1975). Although developing ideas may be expressed as important, they are frequently abandoned as impossible in a specific context because of administrative control, cooperating teachers' disapproval, and students' lack of interest. Without a platform of beliefs broad enough to encompass diverse approaches, a platform over which they might experiment to generate new understandings in a given context, student teachers often see the university and secondary schools as two very different worlds. Immersion in the classroom tends to preclude an inquiring disposition (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1983).

A confusing and complex situation exists for preservice English teachers. They hear ideas in English Education courses about encouraging students to respond as they read literature, engage in discussions, and compose thoughts in oral or written forms (Moffett, 1981; Rosenblatt,

1965, 1978). However, in secondary English classrooms they often see a heavy emphasis on mechanics and rote answers (Goodlad, 1984; Squire & Applebee, 1968). Polarities exist between professional habit--correcting every error in student work and using only "good" literature--and possibility--replacing teacher correction with student editing and including young adult fiction and nonprint media as literature (Boomer, 1982). Instability is caused when ideas are seen as either/or situations. Obstructions to the act of teaching--cited by teachers to explain their traditional, didactic teaching--cannot always be attributed to school administrators (Diamond, 1982). Teachers educators then must ask if preservice teachers' core and central beliefs have been altered. Are they able to forge a personally effective approach to action?

The answer to the question--what is English?--reflects which goals are central and which of lesser importance to the English teacher (Applebee, 1984; Probst, 1986). If the teaching of literature is viewed as a way to preserve and transmit the literary heritage, teachers talk to students about the literary canon, historical content, and the author's influence on others. If the teaching of language is viewed as a means to develop basic skills, classroom work is dominated by exercises, behavioral objectives, and measuring predetermined progress levels. If literature is thought to be a collection of moral lessons, books are carefully chosen to project the proper viewpoint and used to indoctrinate students in their thinking. Applebee (1984) asserts that teachers' acknowledged goals for the teaching of literature, as a way to broaden values and perspective, conflict with an emphasis on specific knowledge or content.

In the past century, the justification for the teaching of English changed from rote learning for the purpose of mental discipline to

knowledge of a selected heritage to a set of skills to be developed. Teaching English as a means of providing guidance and encourage adjustment was replaced with an emphasis on introducing students to the conceptual structure of an academic discipline. After the Dartmouth Seminar of 1966, some English teachers thought about the growth and development of the individual student and about the processes of learning language. However, they were soon pressed to be accountable as if in an industrial management complex. Is relevance, measurement, basics, or academic excellence most important? Evitable choices must be made by each classroom teacher. Those choices are influenced solely by outside forces unless teachers "have developed a personally articulated set of principles and theories to justify, explain, and inform what they do" (Boomer, 1982, p. 141). That necessary theorizing begins when preservice teachers think about the content and learning priorities of the English curriculum before they enter the classroom as teachers.

Design of the Study

The purpose of this inquiry was not to determine cause and effect. It was, instead, to look at aspects unique to teaching English and to develop an idiographic understanding of a specific group of preservice English teachers. The interview format and case study methodology of naturalistic inquiry were used for the research.

The Setting and the Participants

The study took place in the English Education program area of a large, research university. Students in this area were offered a choice of three programs which would lead to secondary English teaching certification. Each program required a set of professional courses, relevant academic

credit, and 220 hours of field experience prior to student teaching. In addition to undergraduate Education majors, graduates who held degrees in English or a related field, such as Communication or Theater, enrolled in the program area to receive certification to teach.

For the focused research, purposive sampling was used to choose a variety of respondents which would increase the scope and range of data as well as the likelihood that a full array of multiple realities would be uncovered. The purpose was to maximize information, not facilitate generalizations (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Names of students were chosen from English Education course rosters which showed their major area of study and undergraduate or graduate status.

The 20 respondents used in the study were representative of the student enrollment and diversity of programs in the English Education department. These preservice teachers anticipated student teaching within one or two quarters. They had been, or were concurrently, enrolled in at least two methods or materials required by the program area. The sample consisted of:

1. Eight graduate students enrolled to receive certification:
    a. Four held a Bachelor of Arts in English.
    b. Four held a Bachelor of Arts in a related field--Theater, Communications, Journalism, and Psychology.
2. Twelve undergraduate students:
    a. Three in Education, English Communications.
    b. Three in an alternative field-based program.
    c. Six in Education, English Comprehensive, three of which had a second area of specialization.

All of the preservice teachers who were asked to participate in the study and who qualified for it readily agreed to be interviewed.

The Data

The indepth interview was chosen as the primary means of gathering data in the preservice teachers' own words. An interview guide, developed in the course of a two-quarter pilot study, focused the questions to be asked. It contained a cover sheet where respondents filled out personal data, degree or certification sought, and English Education courses taken. The aim in each interview was to have a guided conversation about the preservice teachers' perceptions of their educational background and their projections about teaching. Respondents were told that all questions could be explained, eliminated, or elaborated upon.

The interview guide of 36 questions was divided into the following sections: physical materials and setting (Bussis et al. 1976); components of the English curriculum (Applebee, 1974; Boomer, 1982); learner, learning, and schooling; teacher role requirements (Oberg, 1984); educational background and the future (Lortie, 1975).

Although questions in the interview guide (Appendix A) were grouped according to the main components of the study, answers to the questions from various sections elicited ideas which overlapped with thos in other sections. The individual interviews were audiotaped, transcribed, and resulted in from 12 to 21 pages of double-spaced, typewritten pages.

Each interview ended with a written questionnaire which was developed during the pilot study after it was determined some questions were difficult to answer without seeing the various alternatives presented. On the two-page, five-section questionnaire (shown in Appendix B), the respondents were asked to do the following:

1. Choose and circle any number of words that describe the roles of a teacher or add other terms in the space provided.

2. On a five-point Likert scale, mark degree of agreement or disagreement with fourteen statements about the teaching of English. (These statements reflected the polarities between habit and possibility noted by Boomer, 1982).

3. Rate the usefulness or importance of twenty-two items which would affect daily work in the classroom.

Research notes and appropriate records were added to the interview materials as data. As the respondents completed the written questionnaire, the researcher wrote down immediate reactions to the oral interview. These field notes about the respondents were kept as data. Records required by the Education Department had been prepared by the respondents as part of a packet which was to provide information for school and university personnel. These records with data about field experiences and a written page which was to be the preservice teachers' philosophy of education were available to the researcher as additional data.

Method of Analysis

The process of data analysis was concurrent with much of the data collection. Transcriptions of the interview data were used as the basis for preliminary summaries. Data reduction--the process of selecting, focusing, and transforming the words--occurred continuously throughout the study. Various charts, tables, and narrative texts were developed as data displays. Conclusions were tentatively drawn as meanings were verified by returning to the transcriptions, the responses to written questionnaries, and the data displays. Table 1 shows the concurrent activities of the ongoing and interactive process as the data were reexamined and the analysis reconceptualized (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Table 1

Analysis

Anticipatory Study:

1. Experience teaching courses to students similar to respondents
2. Supervising student teachers
3. Pilot-field study
4. Literature review

Focused Exploration:

1. Pilot study interview
2. Refinement of questions
3. Analysis of two parts of pilot study
4. Choosing respondents
5. Preparing for interviews
6. Conducting interviews
7. Transcribing interviews
8. Collecting records, documents, and written questionnaires

Concurrent Activities:

With Anticipatory Studying:

1. Determining questions
2. Constructing interview guide for oral and written responses

With Focused Exploration:

1. Summarizing answers to each question
2. Writing analytic summaries
3. Determining themes to use for codes
4. Coding transcriptions
5. Making data displays in chart form
6. Determining organizational categories
7. Grouping words into large displays according to organizational categories
8. Noting themes, patterns, comparisons, and contrasts in data
9. Writing process

Data were analyzed inductively to identify recurrent themes, patterns, and conflicting ideas. Analytic summaries led to a determination of themes to use for coding transcriptions. Following the coding of 278 pages of transcriptions, six organizational categories were established to encompass the codes. The term "code" is used here to mean words or abbreviations applied to sentences or paragraphs of transcribed interviews. The codes were used to classify words and were organizing devices which aided the retrieval and ongoing analysis.

The process of analysis evolved as data generated tentative hypotheses. This analysis was similar to the constant comparative method of Glaser & Strauss as discussed by Guba & Lincoln (1985) and Bogdan & Biklen (1982). Coded data were compared with previous words marked with the same or different codes. This comparison generated the theoretical properties of the categories. As seen in Table 2, some codes became organizational categories, others were subsumed and grouped with related codes. The categories were both descriptive and explanatory and encompassed what the respondents had said. The coded words of the respondents were grouped in large displays according to the six organizational categories. On these displays, information about themes, patterns, predominant metaphors, and images were written which aided in the writing process when further analysis was done.

Procedures to establish trustworthiness, that is, credibility or truth value, dependability and confirmability of the study included making available an audit trail following a format by Guba & Lincoln (1985). During the analysis no item of information was accepted that could not be verified from at least two sources of data. Thus respondents' answers were checked with other answers that dealt with the same topic or against

Table 2

Codes and Categories

Organizational Category	Code	Abbreviation
Past school experiences and expressed changes in thinking	Past school experiences	Past
	Change of ideas	Chan
Professional courses and present school experiences	Teacher Education	TeEd
	Field Experiences (impressions, stated lessons learned, as viewed against background of past)	Field
Components of the English curriculum	English--literature, grammar, writing, reading, speaking. (Answers what is English?, purpose of its study, what would be emphasized. Is more general than statements about instructional questions concerning teaching and learning)	Eng
Teacher's role	Teacher's role (descriptions of outstanding teachers, stated characteristics or traits which are desirable)	TeRo
Learner/learning/schooling instructional concerns	Learner/learning	L/L
	Beliefs about learning/teaching	Belt
	Beliefs about the context of schooling	Con
	Strategies for instruction (statements about students, how they learn, what schooling should be, the context for teaching, expressed strategies to encourage learning, and desired outcomes of teaching)	St
Career	Career decisions and goals	Car
	Fears, anticipations, concerns, perceived obstacles	Fear
	Future career plans (job-related statements, including personal reflections about career in teaching)	Fut
Put in whatever category it referred to	Confusion	Confu

information from the written responses. In naturalistic inquiry, applicability or transferability is determined by those who read the study. Therefore, the researcher used the case study format in the reporting of this research with the intention of providing the full descriptions and explanations necessary for a reader to make judgments about transferability.

School Landscapes: The Views of Preservice Teachers

All preservice teachers' knowledge and perceptions of teaching are based upon their past and present school experiences--as they understand them. Their personal histories, their lived lives (Greene, 1978) which constitute what is meant by their landscapes, form the background for their specific school landscapes. Their experiences cannot be separated from the ideas and intentions which will subsequently influence their teaching practices. Thus this exploration of the images held by the 20 preservice English teachers began with a look at their past and present school landscapes.

Their own schooling was part of the background which shaped the context for both the preservice teachers' learning in the university classrooms and for their expectations when they participated in school field experiences. Decisions made about their major field of study were also part of the respondents' school landscapes. Therefore, descriptions of their high schools, decisions about career choices, and reactions to field experiences will be discussed as part of the context for the preservice teachers' thinking about teaching English.

The Past

Previous school experiences served as the sources for the respondents'

imaginative rehearsals as they anticipated their future conduct as teachers of English (Greene, 1982). These experiences provided the frameworks or landscapes for viewing, and the standards for judging, when in classrooms. The preservice teachers' remarks about the past did not only come as responses to the researcher's questions about teachers from the past or her request for a description of their high school. Twenty-eight different questions, at all points during the interviews, resulted in various respondents' references to their past school experiences.

High School Setting: A place of nurture, play, control or competition. Respondents did not talk about their high schools apart from their feelings about the schools. What they perceived as the positive or negative effects of their past education were intertwined with the descriptions.

Four preservice teachers, two graduates and two undergraduates, spoke about their high schools as places of nurture where they were challenged and encouraged to learn because their education was valued. These respondents spoke of camaraderie and spirit, of a supportive structure, of feeling like they belonged as members of a study body, and of the "good preparation" they had received for college.

Two undergraduate respondents described their high schools as places of fun where they had had too many choices and, therefore, felt unprepared for the academic work in college. They said they would have welcomed more guidance and challenge from teachers in their schools.

The other respondents talked about their high schools as "outrageous," "hostile," "authoritarian" places of control or places of competition. Those who spoke of control remembered rigidity and constraints, narrow-minded and negative teachers, principals as distant managers, and

restricted curricula. These were schools where students, who perceived themselves as enemies to the institution, "put in their time."

Where competition was the primary emphasis, respondents spoke of pressure to excel in sports and academics. To those who succeeded in school, the competition was more like a sporting event or game than the combat of a war. However, whether referring to combat or competition, war or game, the image was that of sides against each other where there were winners and losers. Two respondents, a graduate and an undergraduate, had not considered themselves winners in schools where they had been "lost in the crowd."

The images of schools as nurturing, supportive places, as playgrounds, as factories or prisons, games or war zones overlapped with descriptions of schools as small or large, rural, urban, or suburban. Certainly the same school might be a place of play to one student and a place of competition to another. A surprising finding was that two respondents had been in the same graduating class of one high school. One, an undergraduate, described his high school as a place of play. The other, a graduate, described the high school as authoritarian, a place where she was afraid of giving the wrong answers. What emerged as the dominant image of each preservice teachers' school showed what school was for them--their school landscape.

Subject Matter and Learning. The preservice teachers' assumptions about English as a subject and what they would like it to be were viewed against the way they remembered it from their school classroom experiences. The prevailing description of what took place involved grammar drill with an emphasis on isolated skills and recall. According to many of the respondents, curricular aspects of English ought to be

different from the "dissecting" of language components and courses they remembered. They repeatedly stated that they used to think English class was strictly lecture with no interaction between the students and teacher and no use of visual media or materials. Their accounts were filled with references to what they had not learned in high school which they felt would have been beneficial. Respondents talked about reading only what they had to read, of being "scared to death of round robin reading," of being inhibited in their writing because of experiences in high school, and struggling with "boring," "ritualized," classes. Many hoped learning English would not be for their future students what they had "gone through."

Teachers. Only two preservice teachers, both were undergraduates, described "good" teachers because they felt they did not have any outstanding ones. The other respondents enthusiastically described, with concrete detail, the exceptional and influential teachers who had been vivid constrasts to other teachers in their schools. Energy and honesty were the most admired characteristics even when the personalities and approaches described were very diverse. Humorous stories told about the outstanding teachers revealed that the human side, the person, was recalled even when a teacher's approach was very challenging. Age, subject matter, appearance, grade level taught, nor kind of school determined whether a teacher was considered to be outstanding. What mattered were the meaningful projects and "weird stuff" that promoted the learners' involvement where person and task were brought together in the interactive teaching and learning event.

Career Decisions. Only one of the 20 preservice teachers chose English Education as her first field of study. All of the others had

begun in another major--some chose Education after trying two or three other fields. It is not unusual for college students to change their majors; however, what is important is the reason given by the respondents for their career decisions. They had always wanted to teach but had a negative perception of teaching as a profession and "felt the pressure to do something significant." Many respondents, disappointed with other fields, entered Education after experiencing enjoyable teaching and coaching situations in settings other than classrooms.

The Present

View from Field Experiences. As a required part of their professional preparation, the 20 preservice teachers had been assigned by the university to spend 220 hours in a variety of classrooms. These field experiences, along with the time in university classrooms, became their present school landscapes. The respondents described teachers, students, and classrooms--"real eye openers"--which they viewed against their past school experiences and judged according to their developing ideas about teaching English. While "doing field work," the preservice teachers seemed to think of themselves more as students than as teachers.

Their statements about field experiences were overwhelmingly negative as they talked about disturbing factors that seemed to interact and influence each other--negative teacher attitude toward both students and job, routine instruction, and student passivity. The respondents were disturbed about the lack of discussion, "watered down" and outdated content, prevalent use of worksheets, assigned material for students to do by themselves and be tested on, writing used as punishment, "trapped" teachers talking to students in a degrading manner, and students acting like drones who were afraid to ask questions. The preservice teachers

were very concerned about the repressive atmosphere in many schools and rigid, cynical, disillusioned teachers such as the one who asked why anyone would "go into education."

Similar descriptions about discouraging experiences emerged from a variety of respondents from each category of the sampling. Patterns did not emerge according to the type or location of school where they participated in field experiences. However, individual responses could be understood according to personal landscapes. A graduate respondent who had attended a very challenging high school found the "apathetic, sleeping" students to be a "rude awakening." An undergraduate respondent was impressed with the use of audiovisual equipment because "her small, country school . . never really had any."

One very positive picture of a field experience was described by a graduate respondent who observed a class taught by an exceptional teacher. She watched him interact with, and learn from, the students while encouraging their involvement with British Literature. She wondered why she "had missed out on this" when in high school. Another graduate talked about the contrast between the positive reaction she had when talking to students individually and her negative impressions from watching the class as a whole.

Combined with the discouragement and disillusionment that resulted from being in the school contexts, some development and expansion of ideas had occurred. Ironically for many of the preservice teachers, the lessons learned from the observations and limited teaching opportunities revealed "how <u>not</u> to teach." The field experiences certainly contributed to the preservice teachers' fear of constraints and concerns about survival in school settings.

Teacher Education. Many respondents talked about the "new ideas" learned in English Education courses. One undergraduate described the methods courses as the "icing on the cake." A graduate preservice teacher said she enjoyed finding out that her ideas were not "out there in the frosty cold all by themselves." However, two respondents who perceived their own preparation for college as inadequate, wished for more English subject matter content instead of "methods." The undergraduate preservice teachers who had extensive field experiences were the most disturbed about the idealism of the university courses as contrasted to the "realism from having gone into the field." They were not able to reconcile the "two worlds" as a graduate respondent did who saw the two as complementary. She said that her head might be in the clouds, but the field experiences made her pull the "clouds a little closer to the ground."

School Landscapes as Backgrounds

It was apparent from the preservice teachers' images of what their past and present school landscapes were that new understandings and new knowledge were being rejected, accepted, or tested against what was understood and known before (Greene, 1984). Many of them wanted school, especially English classes, to be different for their future students than how it had been for them. The disturbing pictures of student passivity that emerged from field experiences were not a part of the view when an individual teacher showed enthusiasm and concern about both subject and students. The centrality of the teacher's role in determining classroom activity and tone was apparent in respondents' interpretations of their own high school experiences and field work observations. Those teachers who encouraged student participation were clearly the ones considered to be outstanding.

The teacher's personal attention to, and interest in, both the learner and the subject matter is a crucial component if education is to be more than an assembly line or combat zone. Shaped by life experiences, including those which occur in formal educational settings, certain attitudes toward others and dispositions toward teaching develop and are carried into the teaching role (Goodlad, 1984). The personal constructs and the growing intuitions and beliefs of preservice teachers determine what ideas presented in teacher education are shaped, controlled, or rejected. Encouraging a reflective stance toward the personal dispositions and attitudes which will be carried by preservice teachers into student teaching experiences and teaching roles should be an important part of teacher education, along with the pedagogical skills to be acquired and developed in guided school experiences. This inquiry which probed the respondents' ideas about subject matter content, images of teachers' roles, beliefs about learning, and concerns about teaching careers led to implications for education which will be discussed following the discussion of the images and concerns which were shaped by the respondents' school landscapes.

Findings: Images and Concerns

The descriptions of the preservice teachers' school landscapes showed that the respondents were aware of the difference between English as it was taught in their own high schools and ideas about its teaching as presented in university education courses. There were conflicts between their developing ideas about teaching English and the learning priorities of the curricula as embodied in the instructional activities of classrooms observed in field experiences. Influenced by how they constituted their

school landscapes, the preservice teachers had ideas and images about schools and classrooms. Their thinking about what they would like teaching to be for them was shaped by these images. The discussion of the preservice teachers' beliefs about teaching English is divided into subject matter components, ideas about learners, learning and schooling, roles of a teacher, and career concerns.

English Curriculum

Attempts to classify any of the preservice teachers' beliefs about teaching as a traditional conception of the curriculum, or as only growth-oriented, or predominantly concerned with skills competency were not successful. All of the respondents reflected in their statements some combination of many of the aspects that teaching English has meant. The nature and content of the three predominant approaches to the English curriculum are not mutually exclusive in practice, but each has a primary emphasis, as shown in the following summary:

> The traditional approach--concern with transmitting the content of the subject matter as a predetermined body of information. The main elements are literature (knowing the history and genres of classic works, biographical information, and determining the author's message), composition (reading about expository types and following set formulae when writing), and language (learning the one correct "standard" English, drill in identification of parts of speech, and knowledge about structure to precede use of language). The extreme of this model removes issues from adolescents. The image of a conduit or pipeline characterizes this approach.
>
> The skills approach--concern with a set of skills or behaviors which are segmented, measured, and tested in unchanging patterns. Decoding correctly is more important than understanding or responding in reading. The values of literature and written expression are hidden behind lists of competencies. Because nonutilitarian content is omitted, the image of a tool reflects this approach.

> A growth-oriented approach--concern with the process of personal and cognitive development of each individual, centered on relating materials to students' experiences and on their interactions in the processes of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. An extreme of this approach can become indulgent to what each student decides he or she is interested in. However, with strong teacher guidance and interaction, this approach can make use of content as a medium of expression to encourage thinking and coming to know self and others. The image of a window into the world and self (Elbaz, 1983) characterizes this approach.

The responses of the 20 preservice English teachers concerning English--its components, purposes, and emphases--reflected predominantly growth-oriented ideas. Interspersed with these ideas were phrases which revealed the existence of very traditional assumptions about teaching English. The components of the English curriculum most often mentioned by the preservice teachers were literature, grammar, composition--in that order--and the language processes of reading and writing. Linguistics, speech, theater, and journalism were mentioned by those whose background, interests, and capabilities matched those areas. Repeatedly the respondents stated that English to them would not be grammar drill; it would not be lectures about literature in lieu of discussion about ideas; it would not be English as broken into distinct parts nor isolated from other subjects.

Literature. Many of the respondents defined literature as anything written. To some it was restricted to mean "good works," the classics; to others the definition of literature was expanded to include nonprint media. The various responses defining literature fit on a continuum as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Literature: A Continuum of Definitions

Great works: Classic and modern with "second level"	Anything written	Includes all media
7 responses (2 graduates; 5 undergraduates)	10 responses (5 graduates; 5 undergraduates)	3 responses (1 graduate; 2 undergraduates)

The definitions on the right side of the continuum that would include nonprint media would also encompass other types of literature. Those on the left side which would limit what can be called literature are more traditional, reflecting the idea that there is a clearly defined line between literature and other kinds of writing.

Many of the preservice teachers would teach literature for its espoused broadening effects--"to explore what people think," "to enlarge one's views." However, some would use it to improve thinking or communication skills, to learn the author's message, to expose students "to what is good," or to teach them to critically analyze the form and content. Therefore, many traditional reasons which have been used to justify the use of literature in the school curriculum, including as a way to improve skills, continued to influence their thinking. The idea of beginning with students' responses was stated by some of the respondents. Many of them wanted learners to enjoy reading literature but were often more concerned with teaching them to "appreciate all the wonderful parts." One graduate expressed more consistent growth-centered beliefs than the others had. To her the purpose of literature study would be as a catalyst to encourage learners' thinking about themselves and the world.

Grammar and Writing. Questions about grammar and writing resulted in answers filled with anxiety. All respondents seemed to feel the need to make a statement about grammar, particularly when asked about what comes

to mind when thinking of teaching English. "Grammar, that was all I thought about until I got into comprehensive education and now it is more reading and discussion," was a characteristic remark.

The preservice teachers believed the mechanics of written work should be secondary to content and expression; yet they worried about how to evaluate students' written work--"a gray area" and "a stumbling block" to them. Only one respondent, an undergraduate, detailed how she would evaluate written work using "the holistic thing." Some respondents would emphasize mechanics in middle school writing as preparation for high school when students could write about literature. The preservice teachers did not believe learning to write meant reading about writing or following specific predetermined patterns. Respondents felt that knowing grammar--meaning the identification of parts of speech or proper usage--did not guarantee one could write. However, their responses to many questions showed more concern with "how to teach grammar" than with how to encourage students in their development and understanding of the writing processes.

Whether it was their own inability to identify parts of speech, the question of what approach to use when teaching grammar, what role grammar played in students' ability to write, or how to evaluate usage, the topic of grammar was problematic for the preservice teachers. Their feelings about it reflected what they remembered about past experiences which included an emphasis on grammar drill that did not lead to understanding and their view of field experiences where bored students did grammar worksheets yet could not write. Such experiences disturbed the respondents because they needed guidance in ways to carry out in practice an emphasis on the uses of language and the processes of learning to

express and communicate thoughts in writing. Some of the respondents did have desired lesson images in mind which included such activities as journal writing and free writing.

The majority of the preservice teachers' responses showed growth-centered ideas, such as a concern with the students' experiences as they explored language and learned to relate materials to their lives. However, the respondents did not know how they would carry out these ideas in the classroom. Statements about exposing students to different types of literature to shape their style of writing or having students read to receive a communication were reminiscent of traditional uses of literature. Statements about reading to attain the "knowledge and attitudes needed to be responsible citizens and earn a living" or to improve vocabulary for SAT scores show a skills emphasis. Findings in the following section show that the beliefs many of the respondents expressed concerning the goals for instruction in the English classroom conflicted with their images of what learning and teaching should be.

Learner/Learning/Schooling

The preservice teachers'espoused ideas about what components of the curriculum should be emphasized will not, of course, solely determine classroom practices. Constraining factors and consequences in various contexts will differ as an array of problematic aspects contribute to the complexity and uncertainty of given situations. However, barriers or obstacles may not solely come from outside factors such as curricular documents or community expectations. Before preservice teachers enter classrooms as new teachers, their ideas about instruction may be very different from what would be necessary to carry out their stated curricular priorities.

Various studies were reexamined as a way of looking at the consistency between the curricular and instructional priorities as stated by the 20 preservice teachers. Diamond (1982) determined that what goes on in English teachers' heads and their own commitment to stated constructs precedes the reality in school and class contexts. He explained that certain instructional practices must take place for curricular approaches to be implemented. For example, when direct presentation is predominant and the amount of student participation is low, classroom conditions do not fit a growth construct. Oberg (1984) also investigated teachers' beliefs by probing what superordinate constructs or principles underlied practice.

With the 60 teachers interviewed for their study, Bussis et al. (1976) found that some noticeable set of concerns interlaced the many curricular and instructional topics discussed. Comprehensiveness was the most important theoretical characteristic that differentiated the learning priorities held by the teachers. The classroom goals for those having narrow priorities were centered around a limited range of behaviors and a concern with grade-level facts and skills. Some student initiative and independence in discovering the correct answer was a priority for those with middle-range goals. Comprehensive priorities were characterized by a concern with students' awareness, intention, understanding, and reflectivity--concerns with subsuming power over other priorities. For example, acquiring facts and skills was not an end in itself but important in the service of a learner's developing sense of purpose.

The work of Chickering (1981) also influenced the scheme used to understand the thinking of the 20 preservice teachers. He showed that college students' orientations toward knowledge and institutional function

can expand from viewing learning as the possession of facts to placing a value on problem solving and then to personally generated insights about self and life.

Ideas from charts and lists used in the works of Diamond, Oberg, Bussis et al. and Chickering were combined to develop Table 4. The terms chosen were applicable to the preservice teachers' views as they discussed priorities for teaching English in secondary schools. Their ideas and feelings about experiences from past and present school landscapes came together as they projected what their teaching practices might be. On the continuum, the place which most clearly shows whether each respondent's priorities for learning and teaching can be described as narrow, middle-range, or comprehensive is marked. For example, UG-8 (undergraduate #8) held narrow priorities; G-5 held middle-comprehensive priorities.

The following sections summarize the respondents' beliefs about learners, learning, schooling and the teacher's role. Learning and teaching connections are then probed and followed by a discussion of images which showed the preservice teachers' career concerns.

Learners: Well-Behaved Robots, Interested Students, or Imaginative Learners. The preservice teachers had definite ideas about what an ideal student would be. What they said about the learner's role was a way of probing their beliefs about teaching and learning. None of the preservice teachers would say that an ideal student is one who misbehaves or one who makes no effort. They would all like students to honor some conventions of expected school behavior and "keep trying" to learn. The difference between the narrow and more comprehensive ideas about the student's role was shown by the expressed priority, such as the contrast between the view

Table 4

The Elements of Education: A Continuum of Priorities

Range	Sources of Knowledge	Learning Processes	Teaching Practices	Learner's Role	Teacher's Role	Schooling-Institution's Role	Career Concerns
Narrow U0 0 U08 U02 U04 U05 02	From external authority; given to learner. **A pipeline**	Acquire information--facts and skills by drill; requires listening.	Lecture--examination; routine instruction about right form and set content	A Black Box--passive receiver, remembrer; needs to show interest, follow directions, be diligent	Authority, director, teller, knower, judge; constrained by institution; sees student as ignorant	Provide information, training programs; enforce policy, reward following of directions. Set up behavioral manifestations. **Place of control**	Be "knowledgable," know answers; judged as competent, know "how" things should be done.
Middle U01 01 U03 04 U07 06 U09 07 U010 08 U011 U012 U06 05	Personal integration of information based on established goals; discover what is needed and useful. **A tool**	Discover correct strategies; learn how to find answers, solve problems, make decisions.	Set up problems & meaningful activities; integration is not a primary concern.	Begin to make choices, assume responsibility, show effort, be involved in meaningful activity as defined from teacher's perspective.	Model questioner, facilitator. Sees student as a mind to be developed & expanded. Choose "right" material to be beneficial.	Provide structural programs, limited choices; set up expectations & standards; promote basic socialization. **Place of competition**	Seen as being productive, interesting.
Comprehensive (subsuming power) 03	Personally generated insights & synthesis based on experience & reflection of learning. Knowledge builds and is a window	To grow--seek new experiences, recognize past conceptions, learn from paradoxes, develop new insights & sense of purpose. Active thinking.	Discussions & variety of approaches. Encourage active participation, synthesis & integration. Reciprocity of learning.	To be: seeker, determiner, independent, involved, reflective, intentional; actively exchange ideas.	Mentor, resource, co-worker, learner. Sees student as whole person. Tolerates ambiguity.	Integrate areas of learning; view teachers as autonomous professionals; foster personal experience & generate insights. Education is harder & more fun. **Place of nurture**	Continue professional and personal learning

that "an ideal student wouldn't be a discipline problem" and the ideal student would "have an open mind" and "try almost anything."

The images the preservice teachers held of the ideal student ranged from a well-behaved robot to an imaginative, questioning learner. The most frequently expressed views revealed middle-range ideas that students should "try hard" by showing interest in what is presented in class and assume some responsibility for their own behavior and learning. The respondents all said the ideal student they described was a contrast to ones they had observed, and, for some, a contrast to the student they had been. They realized that, for learning to take place, some effort or "willingness to learn" had to come from the students. How that interest would be exhibited varied according to whether the preservice teachers held more narrow, middle-range, or comprehensive priorities for what was meant by learning.

Learning: Acquiring Facts, Discovering Answers, or Initiating Ideas. Narrow concerns were characterized by priorities placed on what the teacher would present, tell, and therefore, transmit to students who would learn by listening and imitating. Several respondents discussed beliefs about learning and teaching that showed middle-range priorities and yet incoherent narrow concerns. For example, one graduate discussed how students should be exposed to a variety of ideas and "make their own judgments." However, he repeatedly talked about how he would "take and show kids the general ideas that are in a story." He said he would not emphasize facts, a narrow concern, but he wanted students to remember "what they have been getting."

Middle-range concerns were expressed most frequently by the preservice teachers. They would choose what should be done but would encourage

student participation. They discussed the need for a teacher to try to "make grammar interesting" and to help students learn what was important in literary works--"to bring that appreciation out." More comprehensive learning priorities were expressed by respondents who wanted students to understand the purposes of their learning, not just discover the "correct answers." Skills were not considered unimportant. However, the emphasis would not be on grammar, as one respondent explained, but on the enjoyment of writing and communicating in a way other people could understand.

Schooling. The aims the preservice teachers would suggest for schooling ranged from receiving the proper training as preparation for life to school as education of life. The middle-range concerns for student growth in social development and competence in communication skills emerged from most of the respondents' statements. Student acquisition of "information considered worthwhile in our society" would be the goal of schooling according to many of the preservice teachers. Two preservice teachers, who thought their own high school preparation had been inadequate for what they needed in college, repeated slogans when talking about what schools should emphasize. "Back to Basics" was important to an undergraduate who had previously stated that students' personal growth was more important to her than transmitting the content of English as a subject. "Academic Excellence" was important to a graduate who said his school had trained students for the work force, but he would try to teach what the students had shown an interest in wanting to learn. These preservice teachers seemed unaware of the conflict between their espoused learning priorities and expressed beliefs about the purposes of education. One wonders if they understood the slogans.

The Teacher's Role: Knower, Doer, Resource

Ideas concerning an ideal student, learning processes, and the teacher's role would certainly affect each other. The respondents' beliefs about learning and teaching were separated for this discussion but were overlapping and interrelated in their statements. The process of learning would not be primarily the memorization of facts to the preservice teacher who sees the ideal student as one who keeps an open mind and actively thinks about ideas. Conversely, if the students' classroom behavior is of primary concern, encouraging learners to challenge the content of the subject matter with new insights and ideas would not be a priority.

Successful teachers, according to all the preservice teachers, would be caring, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable. To most of the respondents, the image of a good teacher was that of an effective communicator and guide who would know what should be taught and present it in an interesting manner. The caring teacher would be flexible, which to most of the respondents meant taking an extra day if students needed it to "get" the material. The teacher's knowledge of the subject matter would be essential but not sufficient to assure successful teaching. Most of the respondents would not say a teacher would be a manager or director, but their statements about the importance of getting the kids interested and making them learn were very directive and showed teacher-centered concerns. These preservice teachers who had talked about the importance of relating material to students' lives and encouraging their self-expression also used phrases such as "teach the kids how to learn," "get them to think." However, respondents who held more comprehensive views felt teachers should be learners with and resources to students.

They viewed learners as capable individuals who did not need to be directed to "think."

Learning and Teaching Connections

The differences in various preservice teachers' beliefs about learning and teaching were understood by probing what they meant by growth. Some respondents were more concerned with students' growth in acquiring certain subject matter content as stated in the curriculum and controlled by the state. Growth would be demonstrated by the well-behaved student restating the information labeled as important by the "knowledgeable" teacher. However, to most of the preservice teachers, growth would be shown by students' desire and ability to solve problems and find answers to teacher-determined questions. The enthusiastic, creative teacher would succeed as a communicator who guided the students to be answer-getters without being spoon-fed.

A more comprehensive view of learning emerged from the statements made by several of the preservice teachers who were concerned about students' growth in understanding themselves and acquiring diverse ways of knowing. Students' skill acquisition and ability to solve problems would be subsumed by this broader view in which learners' involvement in the purpose of the learning was of primary concern. The perspectives and experiences of the students were important to these respondents who said they would welcome the challenge of active thinkers in their classrooms. The teacher-centered images of molding, shaping, or directing students which seemed to dominate the thinking of most of the respondents did not emerge from the expressions of those preservice teachers who held more comprehensive views of teaching and learning.

The differences in the respondents' approaches to learning and teaching seemed to result from variation in what was meant by learning, of what an ideal student would do to learn and grow, and of what a teacher could do to shape, control, or reject influences of others. For most of the respondents, the idea of the teacher as transmitter of a rigid curriculum through routine instructional means was rejected. They were discovering more desirable ways of promoting learning and more expanded images of the teacher's role. However, many had not yet come to see their own potential for determining how to use their past and present school experiences and those of the students as resources for learning and teaching.

Concerns

As the preservice teachers looked ahead to student teaching, they expressed personal and professional concerns. The variation in whether direction, freedom, assistance or feedback and advice were desired from cooperating teachers resulted from the respondents' different views of teaching and their own perceived capabilities. Some had heard "war stories," and they hoped the word "cooperating" would be true. Many respondents hoped for the freedom to try out new ideas, make mistakes, and to be able to learn by doing. Others wanted direction in how to discipline and how to set up lessons. One said he hoped to learn from his cooperating teacher "how to teach." Another expressed her fear that the cooperating teacher might leave her alone in the classroom with the students. These findings show that it is not accurate to assume all preservice teachers have the same needs and concerns.

On Stage. The image of "being on stage" encompassed the concerns of many of the respondents as they anticipated teaching. They hoped to learn

how to act, that is, how to "go through the daily moves," how to be in control and reach the audience while avoiding criticism. The preservice teachers were worried about "knowing their lines." Those who did not express such overwhelming concern with being directed hoped for feedback and advice about their teaching.

Survival. The predominant image of the school context as a place of control and competition emerged from the preservice teachers' descriptions of their high schools and those observed for field work. They were concerned about conflict with administrators and communities, competition with other teachers about instructional approaches, and aggression from dissatisfied parents and unruly students. The image of schools as hostile, beseiged places led to their concerns with survival. The preservice teachers projected that, from their positions as "the new kid on the block" and "the low man on the totem pole," it would be difficult to survive the repressiveness of routine, controlled curricular demands, student passivity or aggression, and other teachers' cyncism without becoming discouraged. The examples of outstanding teachers from their past had shown them how powerful the influence could be of survivors that managed to "weather the realities of it all and still stay excited."

Discussion

Much of the concern that the preservice teachers expressed about their survival when "on stage" seemed to stem from their conception of hostility in school settings and their conventional ideas of what a teacher should be. The belief that there are predetermined things that students should learn accompanied the respondents' images of good teachers as ones who enthusiastically communicate to students in such a way as to get them interested in learning the important material. Concerns with subject

matter adequacy and with class control or "discipline" emerged from images of teachers as doers with certain standards to meet for themselves and students. As the preservice teachers talked about field experiences, they expressed their disturbance about teachers who did not seem to treat students as people. Yet keeping the students' perspective in mind became overshadowed by the respondents' lack of confidence in their own adequacy.

The preservice teachers' thinking about the curricular, instructional, and professional aspects of teaching English was reflected in their expressed career concerns. They would like to supplement outdated textbooks with more relevant materials including nonprint media, but they were worried about administrative control and community objections. The respondents talked about their beliefs that the mechanics of written work should be the "fine tuning" and treated as secondary to content and expression; yet they were worried about how to evaluate students' written work. They expressed their strong beliefs that the various components of English should be "integrated," but they were, nonetheless, very concerned about the "problems all English teachers are going to face like teaching grammar." Many of the preservice teachers chose the profession because they found out they "liked working with kids." However, they felt they needed to learn more about how to get them interested and how to discipline before they would be able to teach them. Many of the respondents had ideas about classroom activities they hoped to try but worried about competition from other teachers. They were concerned about "surviving" in schools where teachers did not respect each other or offer collegial support.

The preservice teachers knew from their past what difference a teacher could make in the classroom. Yet, in field experiences, they observed

teachers who seemed to be submerged, trapped by constraints, isolated from other teachers, and faced with apathetic students. The respondents' developing ideas about what teaching could be and about the learning they would like to promote in the English classrooms were very threatened by what was observed in classrooms. The realities of schooling seemed more like something that could be done by a well-trained clerk rather than something that would require an intelligent, sensitive, enthusiastic, and reflective professional.

The preservice teachers who were not as concerned with what they needed to know to be the center of the classroom activity and who were more interested in being a resource to active students were the ones with less anxiety about obstructions and battles. These respondents who expressed more openness to various approaches--not just wanting simple "how to" answers--were those who felt more confident about their subject matter knowledge and their ability to continue learning. They were more insightful about the value of helping students increase their own understanding and sense of purpose rather than only acquiring the right tools to be adequately prepared for life. The respondents who were less threatened by "the big menace of administration" felt that they could use, shape, or reject curricular mandates rather than succumb to their control or compete to work against them.

Table 5 is a summary which lists the preservice teachers by sampling category and shows their high school descriptions, the range of learning priorities, primary fears and concerns, and an expression which was characteristic of each respondent.

The findings of the preservice teachers' beliefs were so complex and individualized that there were exceptions to most of the emergent

Table 5

A Summary of Responses

Respondents	High School	Learning Priorities	Fears and Concerns	Expression
English Education, Comprehensive				
UG-1	Competition (small town)	Middle (get kids to think)	Discipline; Rigid core curriculum	Like being creative
UG-2	Competition (suburban)	Narrow-Middle (what teachers want)	Effective discipline; workable methods	Questions made me stop and think
UG-3	Play (rural-suburban)	Middle (give opportunities)	Nervous in front; how to teach, endure	Grateful for chance to think
UG-4	Play (small rural)	Narrow (confusion)	Scared to death. Older teachers, principals Want direction.	Here to help people, need for back to basics
UG-5	Control (city)	Narrow-Middle (subject-oriented)	Discipline	Need to make difference
UG-6	Nurture (suburban)	Middle-Comprehensive (okay to be different)	Discipline, administration	Felt pressure to do something significant
Communications				
UG-7	Control (city)	Middle (content-the key)	Discipline, administration, need to know more	Born teacher. Interview made me think
UG-8	Control (rural)	Narrow (confusion)	Rules of system, students who can't read	Love to help people. Teaching not first love
UG-9	Control/competition	Middle (interaction)	Scared of teachers, being on stage, censorship, grammar	Develop grace under pressure
Field-Based				
UG-10	Competition (suburban)	Middle (spark imagination)	Wants feedback; disturbed by students like robots	Mission becomes need to survive
UG-11	Nurture (private)	Middle-Comprehensive (students' thoughts)	Being new kid on block, administration	Responsibility to students. Wants to be inspiring
UG-12	Competition (suburban)	Middle (prepare for society)	School boards	Scared to write because of school

Table 5 (continued)

Respondents	High School	Learning Priorities	Fears and Concerns	Expression
Graduates:				
BA, English				
G-1	Control (rural-suburban)	Middle (not spoon-fed)	Curriculum, how to set up lesson	Scared to read in school
G-2	Control/competition (suburban)	Narrow-Middle (tell kids to think)	Survive with positive attitude; parents, administration, diversity	Like kids and like English
G-3	Nurture (suburban/regents)	Comprehensive (literature-catalyst)	Evaluating written work, hope for feedback; not administration	Schools should be student centered
G-4	Control (rural)	Middle (appreciation, articulation)	Need more training; avoid "cockroaches"; Proper pronunciation	Won't be just teacher with B.A.
BA Related Field				
G-5	Control (rural)	Middle-Comprehensive (keep open mind)	Learn survival mechanisms; administration	Vowed would never teach, found have ability
G-6	Nurture (private)	Middle (need to light that light)	Being low man on totem pole; administration	No one teaches you how to teach
G-7	Control (rural)	Middle (academic excellence)	Confinements, discipline, need for content and more techniques	Bothered by negative attitude toward students
G-8	Control (city)	Middle (need to challenge students)	Administration	So much wrong in schools--want to help

patterns. For example, graduate respondents were less concerned than undergraduates with finding out "how to" answers to teaching questions. Yet two graduates who had expressed some uncertainty about personal experiences as students did hope for direction about how to set up interesting lessons. Graduate respondents were generally more open to the idea that no one could teach them to teach and were less concerned about discipline than undergraduates. The only undergraduates who were exceptions and wished for more than how-to directions were those who had been successful students. In both groups the concern with subject matter adequacy was accompanied by the worry about discipline and desire for how-to directions. Also, in both groups, the worry about constraints was most dominant in statements made by respondents who had described their high schools as places of control.

Clustering the high school descriptions and learning priorities of each respondent was done to further probe what patterns existed. This clustering is shown in Figure 2. The following conclusions emerged:

1. No one with narrow or narrow-middle priorities for learning and teaching came from a school considered a place of nurture or had been a "winner" in a competitive high school.

2. No undergraduate held primarily comprehensive priorities: two held middle-comprehensive concerns.

3. Only one graduate, not a winner in a competitive school, held priorities that could not be described as middle or comprehensive. He expressed very traditional ideas about teaching English and narrow-middle learning priorities.

4. The narrow-middle priorities were expressed by respondents from schools of control/competition.

5. Most of the respondents, both graduate and undergraduate, held middle-range priorities and came from high schools of control or competition.

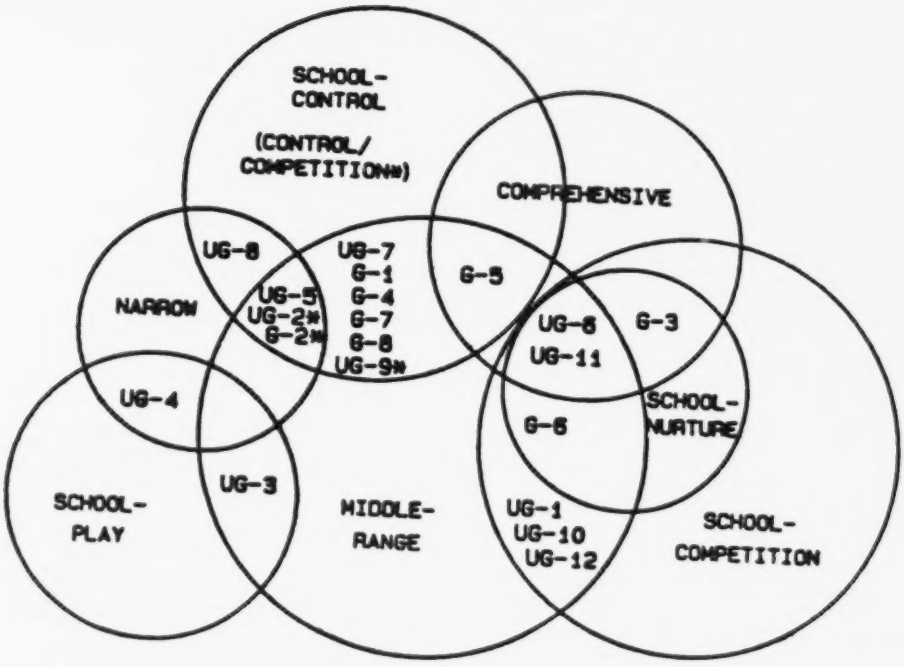

Figure 2

Cluster of High School Descriptions and Learning Priorities

The circles in this cluster show the relationships of type of high school to the held learning priority for each respondent. For example, undergraduate 1 (UG-1) from a high school described as a place of competition held middle-range learning priorities. Graduate 5 (G-5) held middle-comprehensive priorities and described her high school as a place of control. The size of each circle is not significant except to accommodate the intersection with other circles.

For all the respondents, the chance to explore their own assumptions and projections--"to think about what I think"--seemed valuable. Their response to the researcher's gratitude that they had willingly given their time for the study was their appreciation for being able to talk about English teaching. The need for teacher educators to offer preservice teachers support and encouragement to explore their own assumptions, to critically probe their conceptual frameworks, and become more self aware is crucial.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

A Look at Higher Education

Alexander Astin's probe (1985) of what is needed in higher education is very appropriate for this discussion of the preparation of preservice teachers. Educational effectiveness must be judged in terms of talent development, not output or expenditures, according to Astin. The attitude to be perpetuated in education at all levels must be that of regarding as excellent any teacher who is capable of producing significant improvements in the performance of students.

The need for a continuing process of critical self examination which focuses on the institution's contribution to the students' intellectual and personal development is apparent from observations made by Chickering (1981). He wonders how many university courses, instead of treating truth as given by authority, help students build knowledge from personal experience and personally generated syntheses. If college students, specifically here those who are simultaneously preservice English teachers, are taught as if knowledge and learning are commodities like standard-sized boxes sold at the supermarket, how can they be expected to approach learning in any other way when they appear in classrooms as

teachers? Chickering's question is posed here, not as a critique of specific courses taken by these preservice teachers, but as a way of acknowledging the complex factors which have shaped what the respondents think about subject matter, learning, teaching and schooling. The same point is made by Kenneth Eble (1984) as he states that, "what is most needed is a respectful and informed attention to teaching as more than an acquiring of knowledge that may be usefully passed on and more than a utilitarian task that subsidizes research" (p. 26).

There must be something in the preparation of teachers to break the image of the teacher as information disseminator to students who are answer-getters. The university faculty who teach the courses taken by preservice teachers, and the classroom teachers who serve as cooperating teachers for the preservice teachers, must be themselves students of teaching and learning. The critical conditions for effective learning--student involvement, high expectations, assessment and feedback--must exist at all levels of education (Cross, 1986).

Recommendations for Teacher Education

Three overlapping recommendations for teacher education emerge from the interpretations of this study:

1. Teacher educators must promote a climate for theorizing where all teachers approach teaching from the view of the homecomer. When teacher educators, cooperating teachers, and preservice teachers enter classrooms, they must be like the homecomer who creates a new perspective by looking with different eyes at what has been considered familiar. The homecomer becomes self-conscious about what choices are made. If teachers are immersed and impermeable, they can hardly stir others to define themselves as individuals. Teachers, taking the view of the homecomer who returns

home from a long stay in some other place, must interpret and reorder what is seen in the light of a changed experience. Then in wonder and questioning, the learning begins (Greene, 1973). This climate for theorizing is created when preservice teachers are exposed to a repertoire of approaches and encouraged to respond as informed decision-makers who take initiative rather than use information mechanically.

The preservice teachers in this study who described their high schools as places of control were the ones most concerned with constraints and held middle or narrow-middle range learning priorities. They expressed the importance of promoting students' growth in the English classroom. However, growth meant learning to discover the correct answers about specific content as mandated by the administration and communicated by a good teacher. These preservice teachers did not see themselves as capable of making decisions about classroom instruction which would change according to particular students in certain contexts. Their level of concern was to find out how to make activities interesting for reluctant students. The familiar aspects of classrooms were not seen with "different eyes" which could lead to questioning and self-reflectiveness.

The only respondent from a school of control who held middle-comprehensive learning priorities was a graduate who, supported by parents who were educators, said she "loved" school. She was able to look beyond the familiar and theorize about a variety of approaches to teaching because keeping an open mind was very important to her. She objected to school as a narrow pipeline where students are "shoved out the other end." Hoping to promote active thinking by her students, she was aware that a teacher as resource and learner does more than tell.

Unless preservice teachers are encouraged to be such informed decision-makers in each practice context, they will readily succumb to their fear of control--that fear of perceived obstruction was so frequently expressed by the respondents in this study. The role of the teacher educator must be "to work to combat the sense of ineffectuality and powerlessness that comes when persons feel themselves to be the victims of forces wholly beyond their control. . ." (Greene, 1978, p. 64). The attitude that teachers make a difference in student learning should be developed in teacher education (Koehler, 1983).

2. Teacher education departments must exert more control over field placements with the goal that student teachers begin their teaching in a supportive, professional environment. As they learn more about teaching, preservice teachers want assistance, direction, and feedback from cooperating teachers. Yet most of the teachers observed in the field by the respondents in this study were teaching in ways which were antithetic to the preservice teachers' developing beliefs about teaching English. These teachers were using methods and techniques the respondents knew would not promote learning. Concern with how to make it through the day replaced concern with what the students were experiencing. The preservice teachers needed to observe teachers who were encouraging students to respond to literature in a variety of ways. They hoped to find out ways to evaluate written work and encourage increased communication and expression in writing. Instead they observed teachers who relied heavily on textbooks, assigning readings where students were to answer the questions at the end of the story. They watched students struggle with isolated drills on dittos and wonder what they should remember for tests.

From field experiences, respondents described cooperating teachers who "could use a new twist." They heard cynicism in the teacher's lounge, saw little effort to change routine instruction, and were asked why they were in education. The preservice teachers were very discouraged about the negative attitude they saw exhibited toward students. Simply increasing the amount of such field experiences will not guarantee preservice teachers readiness to teach. Certainly preservice teachers who come from high schools of control, who are worried about their own adequacy, who fear "being on stage" will not be strong enough to continue to question and learn without some support.

The preservice teachers in this study hoped for constructive suggestions from their cooperating teachers and a supportive collegial environment when they became new teachers. They were concerned about constraints and competition and would welcome more experienced teachers as mentors. As new teachers they must have some measure of professional autonomy--not the autonomy of isolation--but one enriched by professional dialogue.

The need for support of various kinds and a developmental approach to supervision is evident in the following examples from this study:

> A preservice teacher came from a high school dominated by control; she was disturbed by the routine instruction observed in field experiences; she could talk about growth-centered ideas in the English classroom; she viewed the students' role as that of showing interest in content, the teacher's role as that of communicator, and the purpose of education as preparation for life; she was very concerned about surviving her debut on stage and properly playing the role which would be defined by the school district; she hoped to learn from her cooperating teacher how to develop "grace under pressure."
>
> Another preservice teacher was a winner in a very competitive high school; she was disturbed by student

> apathy observed in field experiences; she wanted students to learn more about themselves and life with literature as a catalyst; she hoped students would see writing as a developing process but evaluation was a "stumbling block" for her; she would like students to be active thinkers who challenge ideas, as the teacher she would set up guidelines for their exploration and learning; the "big menace of administration" did not concern her, but she felt as a new teacher she would have doubts and fears; she hoped for feedback and advice from a cooperating teacher who would act as her mentor.

Changes in teacher education must include a close look at field placement--what is needed to further the development of the student teacher and what the cooperating teacher can provide.

3. <u>At all levels of education, the focus must be on the students' experiences in learning</u>. The focus for teacher educators must be on the preservice teachers' experiences in learning if in turn the focus of that new teacher in the classroom is expected to be on what the secondary students are learning. In this study the preservice teacher with the most comprehensive learning priorities had been a very involved student in high school and college. As a contrast, the one whose priorities were the most narrow had said her imagination did not grow until she came to college because her school curriculum was so restricted. Her lack of success and involvement as a student contributed to confused statements about what she had not learned instead of what she might promote.

The degree of student involvement more than any other factor determined whether preservice teachers held more comprehensive images about what the teaching of English could be. The respondents who were not confident about their own subject matter adequacy or their own knowledge of pedagogy were the ones who held more narrow learning priorities and often stated conflicting ideas. Before they could be concerned with students' understandings, they needed to be more involved learners and

realize that learning would continue. Conversely, those preservice teachers who discussed having had repeated chances--often because of individual outstanding teachers--to make decisions about their own learning were the ones who held more comprehensive learning priorities for their future students. They had come to know the value of active thinking and were aware of the necessity of promoting such a climate when teaching. They talked about feedback from students as a way of learning how to improve their teaching and were open to challenges from involved students.

When preservice teachers focus too exclusively on learning <u>the</u> method or activity to use in the classroom, the student is moved out of the picture. More appropriate learning can occur when the students' involvement with a variety of activities is the focus. The attitude of teaching as focusing on the students' experience in learning must occur in teacher education if the cycle of teaching as telling, bound by constraints, is to be broken. Even the preservice teachers in this study who said they wanted to "be creative" talked about themselves as passive students in university classrooms. Their phrases about English methods courses--"idealism put into you" and "stuff you are getting"--portrayed their view of learning as receiving rather than as active involvement. Their comments were about what others had put into them rather than about what they might take, think about, shape and use, or discard. Thus preservice teachers' guiding frameworks should be of more concern to teacher educators than an emphasis on training them as technicians. Encouraging preservice teachers to acquire a sound theoretical base, something that can only occur when active thinking and questioning are supported, begins with an interest in their involvement as learners.

Conclusion

A focus on student involvement in teaching English would not mean passing information about literature through the pipeline to passive students. It would be, instead, reading and responding to literature in a variety of ways--actively discussing, thinking, and writing about ideas. A concern with student involvement in learning would replace teaching English as isolated grammar drills with that of encouraging students to write in many formats, exploring ways to communicate and express ideas in language others can understand. Preservice English teachers need to understand the importance of the teacher's role in promoting a climate for active involvement in the processes of using language in a variety of ways. Learning in such a school context would be harder but more fun (Moffett, 1981) than the experiences described by the respondents in this study.

The approach to teaching which is guided by the student involvement theory is essential in the English classroom where teacher and students interactively use language. The transaction which occurs between reader and text and between composer and ideas is paradigmatic of how learning and teaching occur best. If preservice teachers, aware of their own landscapes, enter classroom as informed, decision-makers, who perceive themselves as capable of "reading" each practice situation, they will become empowered reflective practitioners who research-in-action by studying the interactive components of students, self, and instructional experience.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

NAME:_____DATE_____

ADDRESS_____

PHONE_____PRESENT SCHOOL STATUS_____

DEGREE OR CERTIFICATION SOUGHT_____

MAJOR:_____

(English communication major, English Education - comprehensive, English Education - general specialization, other)

MINOR:_____

When do you plan to student teach?_____

Any previous teaching experience?_____

Introduction: I am doing a study of students in English Education courses prior to their student teaching experience. It will be interesting to me to know how you view your future role as a teacher of English. The questions I have to ask will take about one hour. I would like to tape record the interview to aid my recall of what you have to say and to help me look for common themes with what other students have to say. Do I have your permission to do so?

Your name and all identifying characteristics will be kept confidential. What you tell me will be combined with other students' ideas and will be used only in terms of general views of preservice English teachers. There will be no way for anyone to identify what you individually have to say. There is also no way what you say will have any reflection on your course evaluations or future student teaching experience.

SIGNATURE_____

Appendix A (continued)

INTERVIEW GUIDE

I. PHYSICAL MATERIALS AND SETTING

1. What would be the physical arrangement of your ideal classroom?

2. What things--books or equipment--do you think will make a difference in the kind of job you will do when teaching? Is there anything that you would consider absolutely essential?

II. COMPONENTS OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM

1. When you think of teaching "English" what comes to mind? (Wait for response, then ask if any of these terms fit: certain subject matter, a medium for expression, teaching great works, the language arts--reading, writing, listening, speaking; learning about language, a means toward guidance and adjustment)

2. What do you think should be encompassed by the teaching of English in the middle school? in high school?

3. What specific aspects of English do you hope to teach?

4. What should be the goals for instruction in the English classroom? (Probes - knowing history and types of literature, personal and linguistic growth, process of expressing and communicating, competency in language arts skills, etc.)

5. What do you mean when you refer to literature? What is encompassed by the term?

6. What is the purpose of the study of literature?

7. What part does the teaching and learning of grammar play in students' ability to write?

8. In the teaching of English, what is important to you? (Probes - transmitting knowledge of English as a subject, in other words, the students hearing the content, or the cognitive or personal growth of the students?)

9. What elements will you consider most important when you evaluate students' written work?

10. In discussing literary works, what would you emphasize?

11. Should all teachers be teachers of writing? of reading?

III. THE LEARNER, LEARNING, AND SCHOOLING

1. How do students best learn to write?

2. How do students best learn to appreciate literature?

3. What is your view of the ideal students. (Pause) Is this a contrast to the students you've observed?

4. What should schools emphasize in the education of children? (Pause. For example, subject matters, individual growth, society's values, cognitive growth, any one or a combination?)

IV. TEACHER ROLE/REQUIREMENTS

1. What, to you, is good teaching?

2. How can teachers find out how to improve their teaching?

3. Do you think a teacher's general knowledge in a subject area affects his/her capabilities as a teacher? If so, how?

4. Has your concept of the teacher's role in the English classroom changed since you have taken the methods courses? How? Since your field experience?

5. Of the teachers you had before college, are there any you consider were outstanding? Could you describe one?

6. What kind of reputation would you most like to have with your classes and students? with your fellow teachers?

7. What traits must teachers possess to be competent and effective?

8. Can an enthusiastic or accepting attitude toward a subject make up for lack of substantial knowledge in an area?

V EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND THE FUTURE

1. When student teaching, what do you hope to learn from your cooperating teacher?

2. What grade level do you hope to teach?

3. How much field experience have you had? Have you had experience in classrooms other than what is on your college transcript?

4. After graduation or completion of your certification requirements, do you anticipate returning to take college courses?

5. Where do you hope to be professionally in 2 years? 15 years?

6. As you observed classrooms in field experiences, describe positive or negative impressions you had about teaching style? about content taught? classroom activities? classroom interactions?

7. What do you think were the most important factors in your decisions to become a teacher?

8. When you begin teaching, do you think there will be any obstacles which might stand between what you must do and what you would like to do? If so, what?

9. As a teacher, what will your responsibilities be to the student, to the parents, to other teachers?

10. Do you think there is one best way to teach?

11. How would you describe your high school?

APPENDIX B

Name_____

After reading the following statements, circle one of the responses that will indicate what you believe about the teaching of English. Select one best answer (number) that reflects the strength of agreement of disagreement.

WHEN TEACHING ENGLISH, I WOULD,

	(strongly agree; strongly disagree)				
1. Use only classic literature, including modern classics.	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD
2. Use contemporary, popular literature, young adult literature, etc.	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD
3. Use language books to teach grammar.	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD
4. Use no pre-prepared dittos, instead work with students' scripts.	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD
5. Correct each error in written work.	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD
6. Replace teacher corrections with student editing.	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD
7. Have students read and write about rhetoric.	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD
8. Encourage students to be authors in their own right.	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD
9. Insist on correct written and and spoken English.	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD
10. Replace correctness with the idea of appropriateness of registers.	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD
11. Keep the identity of English secure (from history, art, etc.)	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD
12. Integrate English with other sources of knowledge.	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD
13. Have students read and answer questions about literature.	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD
14. Have students read and discuss their responses.	1 SA	2	3	4	5 SD

Choose and circle the words that describe the teacher's role:

Director Coworker Guide Teller Facilitator
Superior Manager Learner Friend Questioner
Communicator Leader Disciplinarian Other_____

Name_____

In the classroom, how important are each of the following? Mark a number on the continuum.

	(Very important;				Least important)
1. Students' interest	1	2	3	4	5
2. Students' past knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
3. Students' experience	1	2	3	4	5
4. Students' dialect	1	2	3	4	5
5. Students' desire to learn	1	2	3	4	5
6. Structure of the lesson	1	2	3	4	5
7. Grading of students' work	1	2	3	4	5
8. Positive affect	1	2	3	4	5

What will you probably find to be of the most use when you plan your daily work in the classroom?

	(Very useful;				Least useful)
1. Curriculum Guide	1	2	3	4	5
2. Textbooks	1	2	3	4	5
3. Reference books	1	2	3	4	5
4. Fellow teachers	1	2	3	4	5
5. Ideas from college courses	1	2	3	4	5
6. Students' work and response.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Ideas from administrators	1	2	3	4	5

Indicate the importance of each of the following in contributing to superior teaching.

	(Very important)				Least important)
1. Knowledge of the subject	1	2	3	4	5
2. Teacher's personality	1	2	3	4	5
3. Methods/techniques used	1	2	3	4	5
4. Specified teacher training	1	2	3	4	5
5. Qualified students	1	2	3	4	5
6. Appropriate facilities	1	2	3	4	5
7. Professional Organizations	1	2	3	4	5